THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD) : (a) and (b) In the given socio-cultural environment of the country and keeping in view all concerns, including safety and security of the State, the Guidelines for uplinking of the foreign owned news channels were issued in March, 2003. The Guidelines, *inter alia*, permit foreign equity holding in the applicant company up to 26% of the total paid up capital and require the company to be registered in India under the Companies Act, 1956.

(c) Foreign media houses are unlikely to acquire management of the Company as the Guidelines require CEO, majority of Directors and News Editor(s) to be Resident Indians.

(d) Does not arise in view of (a) to (c) above.

Setting up of electronic news gathering (ENG) units in Orissa

4585. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Orissa has submitted any proposal to set up Electronic News Gathering (ENG) Units at Koraput and Baripada;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to provide financial assistance to the State for providing visual clippings to Doordarshan;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) by when the proposals are likely to be sanctioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Private players in FM stations

4586. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to permit private players in FM stations;

(b) if so, the number of players awarded the licences during the last three years togetherwith their details and licence fee collected from each ;

(c) whether it is a fact that out of the 108 FM stations in 40 cities that were on offer for privatisation, only 13 stations have been taken up; and

(d) if so, the reasons for this poor response and how this trend is proposed to be reversed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD) (a) to (c) Government has permitted private players to set up FM stations. Tenders were invited in respect of 40 cities for 108 channels in October, 1999. On the basis of the auction held in March 2000, 29 companies were selected for allocation of 101 channels in 40 cities. 16 Companies had submitted Bank Guarantee equivalent to first year's licence fee and signed the licence agreement for 37 channels in 19 cities. Till date 16 channels have been operationalised. 6 channels in Chennai and Kolkata are expected to be operationalised shortly. One company has paid licence fees for 2 channels in Jabalpur and Bhubaneswar, which were granted "Deemed operationalised station" status.

(d) The successful applicants/licencees have withdrawn at various stages on account of their own commercial considerations.

Expansion of transmission network in Uttaranchal

4587. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for the development and expansion of transmission network in the State of Uttaranchal for the current and next year; and

(b) the amount proposed to be spent for this work?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PARSAD):

(a) and (b) Two very low power transmitters of Doordarshan at Dewal and Fata are targeted to be commissioned in Uttaranchal during 2003-04. Capital cost of the above two project is Rs. 160.65 lakhs. In addition to the above, uncovered areas in the state are also proposed to be covered with a multi channel bouquet through satellite transmission in Ku-band during the Tenth Five Year Plan. In sofar as All India Radio is concerned, following projects are envisaged as part of the 10th plan.

1. 10 KW FM Tr. with type II studio, Play back Receiving facility and Staff Quarters at Dehradun.